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# Seven Days on the Prairie

with Archdeacon Lloyd

BY THE

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PRICE THREEPENCE



## PREFATORY NOTE.

IN the Spring of 1903 the Rev. G. E. (now Archdeacon) Lloyd was sent out as Chaplain with a large party of British emigrants going out to settle in one district of Saskatchewan, North-West Canada. The story of that colony has been told in the booklet called "The Gospel on the Prairie," published by the Colonial and Continental Church Society.

The present pamphlet is an account of a visit paid by the Secretary of the Society to the same district in August, 1906. Where, three years and a half before, there had been only the uninhabited prairie, he found within an area about 90 miles long by 30 or 40 miles broad, no less than thirty-five centres where worship was being regularly held; eight of which were little wooden churches. He visited sixteen of these centres and preached in eleven of them. No person in that region is more than six miles from a Church of England place of worship of some sort. For once at least the Gospel has gone out with the settler, and he has not been allowed to drift away. Lloydminster itself is now independent of the Society's aid, and Vermilion will very soon follow suit.

The Society has much cause to be thankful for the work it has been enabled to do in this corner of Saskatchewan, but the work done there needs to be repeated fifty times over if the new North-West is to be covered adequately.

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ARCHDEACON LLOYD

## SEVEN DAYS ON THE PRAIRIE WITH ARCHDEACON LLOYD.

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**A**BOUT 7 o'clock on Tuesday night, August 21, 1906, I started from Edmonton by the Canadian Northern. The line, which had not been laid twelve months, is still as uneven as it can be, and delays and accidents are quite common. When I remarked on the rocking of the train to the conductor, he said quite cheerfully, "Yes, sir; we throw that in without extra charge."

Two hours after midnight the train drew up at Vermilion. As usual, one had to alight from the car in the dark on an uncertain bank of earth. I stumbled along to the little station with its brief platform, where a young man with a lantern asked me if I was looking for Archdeacon Lloyd. If so, he was to direct me to the hotel opposite. Accordingly I made my way to the hotel and to the bedroom which had been reserved for me.

Next morning was spent in some necessary business and writing and in looking over the little town of Vermilion. Unfortunately rain fell heavily, and the mud of the prairie, which is remarkable for its stickiness, prevented our getting about as readily as we should otherwise have done.

I looked with much interest upon Vermilion, as being the place where Archdeacon Lloyd had held the first service in Messrs. Pilkies' store ten months before.\* Only those who

**A town a  
year old.**

have witnessed the amazing growth of little towns along the new Canadian railways would credit the fact that a year ago the town did not exist. It has now hotels, stores, livery stables, and dwellings; the Canadian Northern Railway has made it a "divisional point," that is, a place where engines and staff are changed, and all the land for miles on either side of the line is taken up. At the time of my visit the town had already between two and three hundred inhabitants, and it is probably

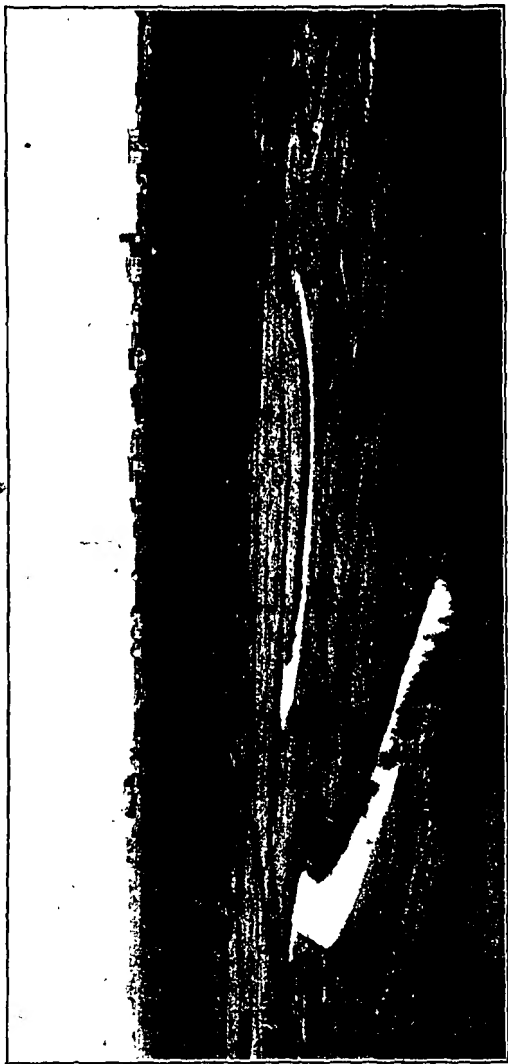
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\* The Archdeacon's account of this scene was told in a characteristically vivid little article, entitled "How the Church Came to Vermilion," copies of which can be had on application to the Society.

destined to go ahead. A storekeeper in a rival town said with picturesque imagery, "Wal, being a divisional point on the railway

don't cut much ice, anyway;" but perhaps that was prejudice.

Church matters had advanced during the year. The Rev. W. E. Gilbert, a graduate of Wycliffe College, Toronto,\* has been put in charge. Services were being held in a large hall above a store, and what is called a "church corporation," that is churchwardens and vestry, has been duly established. A church site has been secured, and an English lady, Mrs. Ard, the mother of a resident and wife of the Rev. A. J. Ard, formerly vicar of St. Saviour's,



VERMILION, FROM THE NORTH SIDE OF THE VERMILION RIVER. [The site of the church is on the extreme right of the picture.]

Tollington Park, has given £500 to build a church. This sum is

\* Mr. Gilbert was one of the Society's divinity students at Wycliffe College, and is an example of the help which such studentships are to the missions of the North-West.

so much larger than the average in these parts that more pains than usual were taken about the plans. This caused some delay, but the church has been built since my visit.

Mr. Gilbert is living in a lumber shack on the church site. This contains one room, and is on the model of the numerous "Lambeth Palaces," humorously so-called, of which the Rev. D. T. Davies was the first builder. He gets his meals at one of the little hotels close by. When the church and parsonage are built, this shack will doubtless come in handy as part of the back premises.

This restaurant where we had our meals afforded an example of that spirit of self-support which is characteristic of the Canadians. "Do you see that young girl

**A waitress's** over  
**generous** there?"  
**giving.** said Mr.  
Gilbert,

indicating a waiting maid of about seventeen. "She is confirmed, and is a member of our church. She has just put down her name to give a quarter (i.e. a shilling) a week towards the upkeep of the church."

Archdeacon Lloyd had planned to have a service at a settler's house about ten miles out, and so, after some hesitation on account



VERMILION : THE BROTHER PILKIES' STORE. [The first service in Vermilion was held in the building on the right.]

of the rain, we got a "rig" and Mr. Gilbert drove us out. As the illustration shows, Vermilion is built on the edge of a cañon, and the road, descending steeply down to the river, is very slippery in muddy weather. However, we got across all right, and in spite of the sluggishness of one of the horses, arrived in good time at our destination.

The journey lay along rolling ground, never quite flat, and with sloughs and clumps of brushwood here and there. Alas! the weather, or the harvest work, or both combined, prevented any



VERMILION: THE FIRST SERVICE AT MESSRS. PILKIES' STORE.

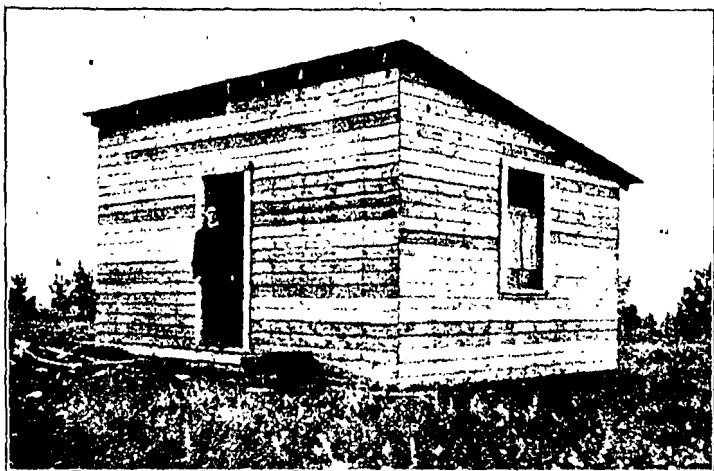
gathering. Mr. Barwick and his wife welcomed us gladly in spite of this, and were delighted to see some one from "the old country."

After some tea, we made our way back again to Vermilion. The horse which we had thought sluggish on the way out proved to be dead tired. The traces had to be loosened, and the horse simply trotted in the shafts, the other horse doing all the work. Our progress was slow, and it was nearly dark when we got into Vermilion.

A service had been arranged, for which we were three-quarters of an hour late. About twenty people were still waiting when we arrived, so we held the service and I preached. I was introduced afterwards to most of those who were present, and they were loth to separate.



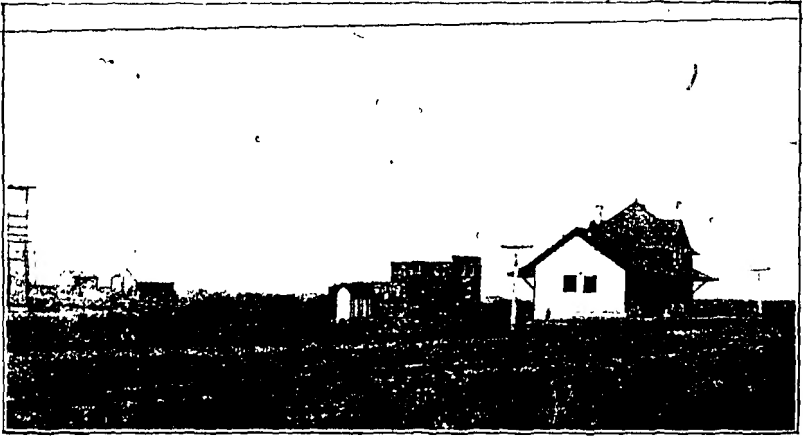
At last we got back to the hotel. One of the Pikkie Brothers, who came on with us, kindly gave me the photograph of their store, and the landlord of the hotel gave me the excellent general view of Vermilion, which has also been made into an illustration. Then speedily we got to bed, for Archdeacon Lloyd and I had to be up at 2.10 A.M. to catch the east-bound train, the only one of the day, and we wished to snatch a little sleep beforehand if possible.



VERMILION : THE "LAMBETH PALACE," WITH THE REV. W. E. GILBERT.

The train was almost "on time," as they say out here, and we started for Islay, a station about an hour farther on, from which I was to commence my tour over the prairie. I was very sleepy, but the Archdeacon, always alert, found a man in the train who could give him some useful information. They got deep in talk, the thread of which I soon lost.

When the train drew up at Islay, Exton Lloyd, the Archdeacon's student son, was at the station to meet us. He rapidly explained that he had brought down from Lloydminster Mr. Lloyd's rig with a tent and provisions, and took a few instructions from his father. Then he went on in the train, leaving us at the station. Mr. A. G. Emmett, the Divinity student who is in charge of the district, guided us with a lantern across some rough ground to the place where his tent and the Archdeacon's were pitched. He had got a fire in his camp stove, and soon had some warm soup ready for us. We were not long in turning in. Mr. Emmett insisted on giving up his



ISLAY: RAILWAY STATION AND GENERAL VIEW.

camp bed to me, and he and Archdeacon Lloyd slept on the ground, rugs and blankets under and over them. Was it the dawn or the



ISLAY: ARCHDEACON LLOYD AND MR. EMMETT PACKING UP

Aurora, Borealis that showed in the sky as we turned in? I cannot tell.

After my second broken night I was very tired next day. The other two would not allow me to do anything, so I watched them cook the breakfast, strike the Archdeacon's tent and pack it on the rig. When it came to "rounding-up" the ponies one was not to be found, and the Archdeacon came to the conclusion that it had trotted back to Lloydminster during the night. However, this



ISLAY: READY TO START.

[Archdeacon Lloyd is driving. Mr. Emmett is on the Indian pony, and his tent is seen on the right. The unfinished building is the new wooden hotel.]

proved to be a false alarm. Something had scared it away, and it returned before we had to start off.

I had time to look about the little place. Islay was then about six weeks old! That is, six weeks before that there had only been one rough shack, which was now restaurant and post-office. In the interval the station was completed, a good-looking store put up, some more shacks built, and an hotel nearly finished. They hoped to be in it the following week, the men said.

Mr. Emmett, in default of a "Lambeth Palace," had been living in his tent all the summer, and had an Indian pony on which he scoured the country round, visiting the farms and holding services at three or four centres. Several of Mr. Lloyd's men are supplied with these Indian ponies, costing about £10 each. They

are hardy animals, not squeemish as to their food, and capable of a great deal of work.\*

There are, I believe, those who rather fancy living in a tent, but for myself a few days is enough. After that I began to wish for a civilised chair to sit in and a table to sit at. How Mr. Emmett did his Divinity reading I do not know.

After lunch Mr. Emmett went round and told the men we were going to have a service, and to my surprise nearly all came. The principal exceptions were a man who was at the bottom of a well digging it out—he said he was a Baptist—and the labourer who was helping him, who was a Finn. Eleven men and one woman came to the service. It is usually held in the little waiting-room

**Services on  
a railway  
platform.**



ISLAY: THE CONGREGATION ON THE RAILWAY PLATFORM.

of the station, but it was so hot that afternoon that we had it on the platform instead. Mr. Emmett produced some pagéd prayer-books with hymns. I trust we all had a profitable time.

\* Alas, they are no longer to be had, even at this price, so great is the demand created by the thousand of incoming settlers.

Service over, the team was hitched up, and we started off for our evening service. This was to be held at "Marlow's." Mr. Emmett accompanied us as guide. After a drive of two or three

**In a  
log shack.**

hours, with a good amount of bumping from badger-holes, we arrived at our destination—a rambling log-shack, with log cow-house attached. The owner was working away somewhere, but his wife and daughters made us welcome. Mr. Lloyd and Mr. Emmett pitched the tent, without much aid from my inexperience.

We had some tea, and then the congregation began to assemble. There were some rigs, but what interested me most was that one



"MARLOW'S": THE SHACK IN WHICH SERVICE WAS HELD.

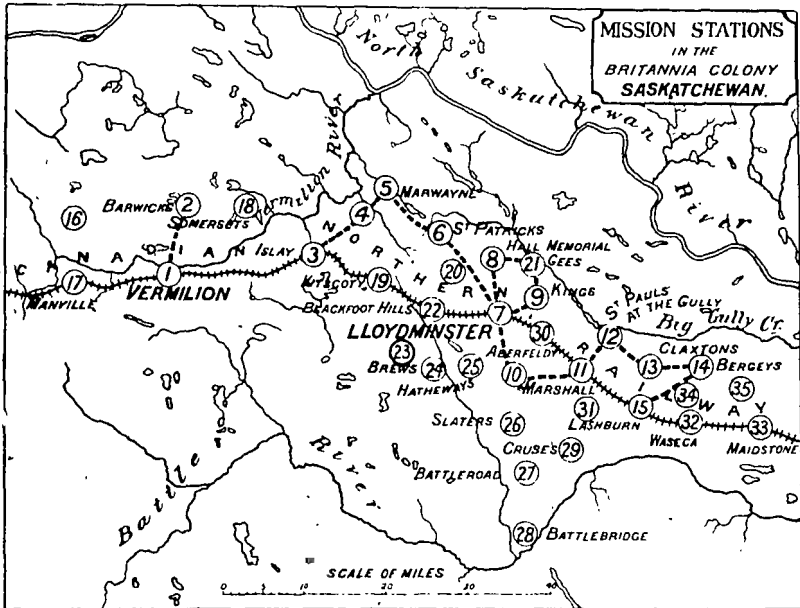
[Our hostess is in the act of boiling the kettle for tea. One of the congregation is dimly seen through the smoke. The buffalo's skull fastened on the wall is a frequent ornament of settlers' shacks.]

couple had come with an ox-team without any waggon, merely the frame—wheels, shafts, and axles. The husband drove the slow-moving animals, and the young wife, with her baby in her arms, sat somehow on one of the axles. Exactly how they managed to sit on it I did not see, but it must have been very uncomfortable, especially when they encountered jolts from badger-holes. All, or nearly all, of those who came were English settlers, and none could be described as well off. At the best, they would hope to turn the corner that year if their crops were got in before the frost came.

Inside the shack I noticed that practically all the furniture was home-made, of logs and poles roughly trimmed; and quite comfortable it was, too. The congregation crowded every corner of the room, and the paged prayer and hymn books were again in use. As the visitor, I preached, and was glad to take the opportunity of assuring them of the sympathy and prayers of the friends in England. After the service, Archdeacon Lloyd had a church talk with the people, and we slowly broke up.

By this time it was dark, and there was no moon. I should think those who lived any distance (the nearest would have half a mile to go, I suppose) would find it difficult to get home. Archdeacon Lloyd and I went out to the tent, and with the aid of a lantern got everything ready for the night. We had no beds, but we were so well supplied with rugs and blankets that sleeping on the ground was no hardship.

Next morning we were up betimes, and our hostess gave us breakfast. Mr. Emmett did not re-appear, having, I suppose,



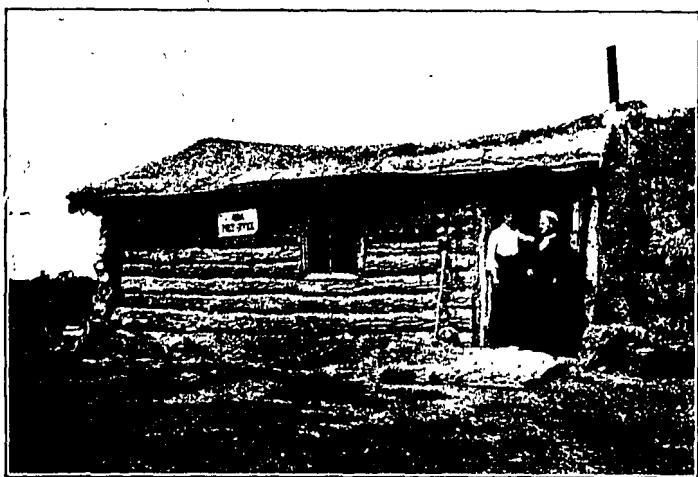
MAP OF THE LLOYDMINSTER DISTRICT.

[The Canadian Northern Railway is indicated by the thick line with short cross lines; the Secretary's route by the dotted line. The numbers are those of mission centres, not all being named. The length of the district is nearly 90 miles by 30 miles breadth.]

returned to Islay. After breakfast I helped the Archdeacon to take down the tent and pack it with our other goods in the back of the buggy. Then we started on our way.

The trail was very faint in parts. There were places where we could not make certain that any wheels at all had passed. In a country a little more thickly settled it must be easy to get lost.

At length the wheel marks became more decided and we arrived at Marwain post-office. The post-office consists of a log shack,



LLOYDMINSTER DISTRICT: THE POST OFFICE AT MARWAIN, AT WHICH SERVICE IS HELD.

where a Mr. Marfleet lives. As he came from Wainfleet, in Lincolnshire, he has coined the name for the place by combining the two first syllables, Mar- and Wain-. "Mother" had put on her best cap to receive us. The old man used to be a gardener in the "old country." He discoursed eloquently on crops, and took me to see the sample plots he had sown.

We waited for a while and then had reading and prayer, and presently set out again. Another drive of several miles, skirting a long narrow lake, brought us at length to a prosperous-looking frame house, by far the best we had yet seen. This was the home of the Rev. Richard Smythe, an Irish clergyman who came out to the country about two years ago with his family and has taken up land. Mr. Smythe, although occupied in farming, is able to

minister to his neighbours in spiritual things. Within a mile of his house one of the little wooden churches has been erected, and close by a log stable for the horses and cattle of those who come to church. The church is called "St. Patrick," no doubt in compliment to Mr. Smythe's nationality, and "on the trail" is added as a distinguishing mark because it is near the old trail from Lloydminster to Fort Pitt.

Mr. and Mrs. Smythe welcomed us cordially, and their tribe of little girls gazed shyly at the strangers. Their elder brother, a boy of about eleven, was full of talk about the wild animals of the prairie, such as coyotes, or prairie wolves, bears, and gophers. He told me how he had shot a mink and got four dollars for the skin.



LLOYDMINSTER DISTRICT THE REV. R. SMYTHE'S HOMESTEAD.

He thinks nothing of saddling a pony and riding off after cattle ; in fact, he is becoming a thorough young prairie farmer.

In the evening we took down lamps with us to the little church. As usual, there was no house near it, but a good congregation assembled, nearly all men, and nearly all young Englishmen. Two warm supporters of the congregation are Swedes, but they are away working for some one else. It was quite an event to have three clergymen at one time in the little church.

As usual, it was the stranger who preached, not only bringing a Gospel message, but as it were reviving memories of the old home land.

The congregation lingered outside the church when our service was over, and, as usual in these cases, seemed unwilling to separate. Several of the young men walked back with us to the farm, where



good Mrs. Smythe welcomed them to supper. When the last remaining guest had gone, Mrs. Smythe provided comfortable shakedown in the living room for Archdeacon Lloyd and myself.

The next day was Saturday. Before we could start something had to be done to our buggy-spring, which had been almost broken through by the bumpings of the two previous days, so a block of wood was tied underneath it, and when we bumped we came down on that! We bade good-bye to our kind hosts after breakfast and drove into Lloydminster. We had not gone far before I caught sight of a coyote looking at us from behind a bush. Archdeacon Lloyd lost the way more than once. Since he had been on that road new fences had been put up and wayfarers had been shut off from the old trails, while the "road allowances," which would become the future route, were not yet clearly defined. I was astonished at the way in which Mr. Lloyd's pair of ponies were put at brushwood five or six feet high, making their way through it unconcernedly.

We got to the Archdeacon's house just outside Lloydminster about midday. I was pleased to see Mrs. Lloyd and the young people, and to be shown into a pleasant bedroom after my few days of roughing it.

In the afternoon I walked over into Lloydminster and looked round the little village and the famous log church. **Lloyd-minster.** There are two principal streets, which cross each other at right angles, one or two side streets, and individual houses dotted about in various directions. The railway station looks quite a busy place. There are several stores, of which Messrs. Hall & Scott's, the store in which the Christmas service of 1903 took place,\* is the most noticeable. Two or three doctors and drug stores provide for the health of the inhabitants. Mr. Lloyd's old "rectory church"† has been surrounded with a verandah and is now the hospital. There is even a newly-erected Masonic temple!

Alas! there are several hotels and many places where liquor is sold—too many by far for the real needs of such a place. It was easy to understand the saying that "but for Mr. Lloyd, Lloydminster would have been one of the hottest little towns in the North-West." Unfortunately the town is on the "fourth meridian," which is the

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\* See "The Gospel on the Prairie," price 2d. Published by the Society.



LLOYDMINSTER: THE CHURCH

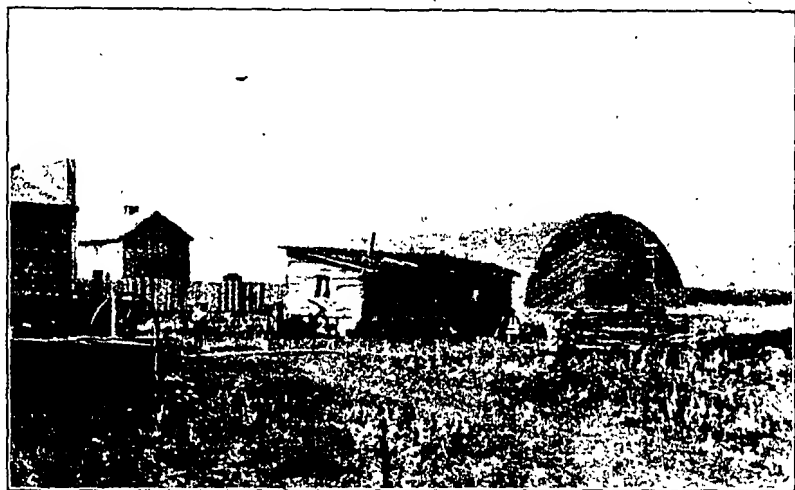
[The wagon in the foreground on the left is of the ordinary type used by the neighbours and is sometimes drawn by oxen. When used for riding, a seat with side-springs is put across the wagon. The houses are all of wood.]

dividing line between the two provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan, so that the dual jurisdiction introduces unusual complications into the local self-government.

That evening we had a meeting of old-timers at Archdeacon

Lloyd's house. What talks there were of the early struggles and privations! The first winter on the prairie in 1903 must have been a terrible one. The settlers were two hundred miles from the nearest railway. Little or nothing had been sown that year owing to their late arrival. Everything in the way of provisions had to be carted up by "freighters," and when it came it was dreadfully dear. When the weather was worse than usual supplies sometimes gave out. I only regret that I did not take notes of the talk; but it was late before we broke up, and I was far too much occupied in the next few days to be able to put pen to paper. I remember one grimly humorous story of the store-keeper replying to people who needed flour that he was out of flour, but he had plenty of axle-grease to sell.

Sunday was a long and heavy day. The morning was cold, with heavy rain. Still, we had a drive of ten miles to the Hall



LLOYDMINSTER: A SHACK SAID TO HAVE BEEN THE FIRST BUILT IN THE VILLAGE.

[The round topped building behind it is a lumber barn.]

Memorial Church. I was arrayed in a "slicker" (an oilskin coat) which was kindly lent me, and Archdeacon Lloyd and I started on our bumpy journey over the trails to church. The difficulty of

keeping up an umbrella when the buggy is bumping one over a succession of budger-holes is considerable.

The Hall Memorial Church was built by a Sheffield lady, the settlers near it being nearly all Sheffielders. The church is an oblong, built of wood, to hold about forty persons. **The Hall Memorial.** Over the doorway is a porch which has been continued up higher than the ridge of the roof, and made to end in an imitation of a battlemented tower. A porch is absolutely necessary in winter, when the temperature is down somewhere far below zero, and it costs but little to carry it up a little further: while, in Archdeacon Lloyd's view, no one could possibly mistake such a building for anything but an English church.

It is a strong centre, and Mr. Lloyd had hoped for a good congregation, but the heavy rain made it impossible. The settlers are mostly too poor to possess teams, and it was impossible to walk long distances through the wet grass; so only a few hardy persons ventured out. Mr. Freeman, the lay-reader in charge, was among them.

We did not think it right to deprive of the full service the few who had braved the weather, so I preached them a short sermon.

By the time we had finished the rain had stopped. When the horses had been hitched up, the sun was out. In bright sunshine we drove off to a shack where a kindly old dame gave Mr. Freeman and ourselves some lunch.

We had no time to lose, however, for we had a long drive before we could reach our afternoon preaching-place. Mr. Freeman, like Mr. Emmett, was mounted on an Indian pony. He acted as guide and escort.

One day I remarked upon these Indian ponies to Mr. Lloyd. "That is one of the Society's ponies," he replied, several of the lay-readers are furnished with them. No cheaper method of increasing their range of visiting can be desired.

Our route was quite often over untrodden ground, and was all the bumpier in consequence. We went down one gully with steep sides. As the horses scrambled up the other bank we came upon a homestead. Near it was a ring of large stones surrounding a little mound and protected by a rough fence. It was a baby's grave. There is no need to point the moral of that sad memorial. What must the life and death of many a child be in the districts where no minister of the Gospel penetrates?

**A child's grave.**

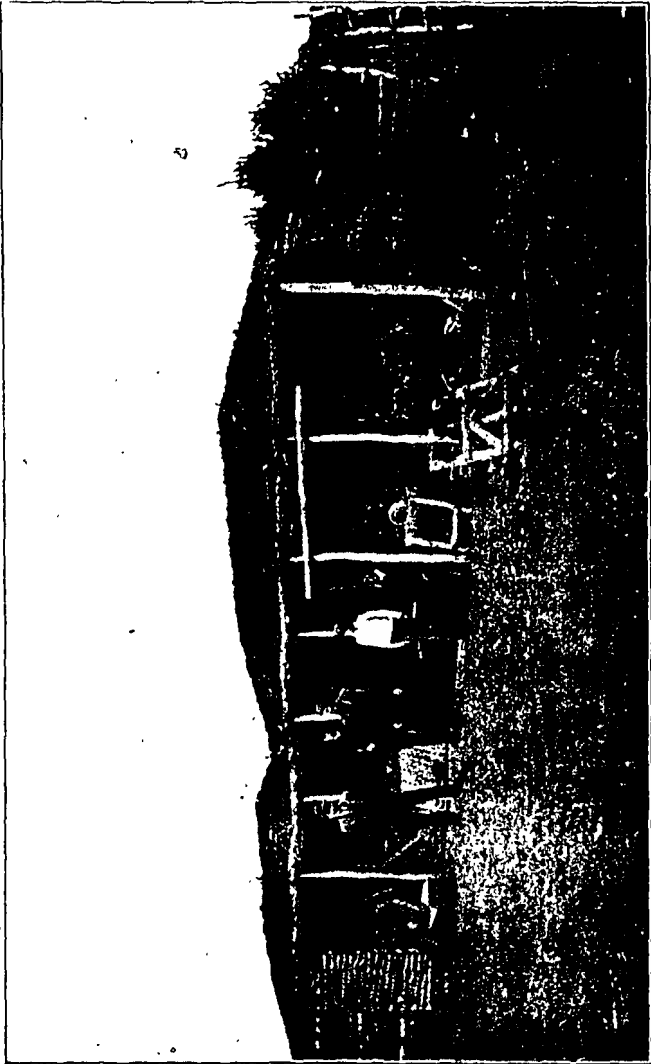
The afternoon was well advanced when we reached "King's"—a long low log shack with other log-farm buildings near it. We had hardly unhitched the horses and been welcomed by **"King's."** our host when buggies and waggons drove up crowded with people. When service began the shack was crowded inside, and there were several men who could not get nearer than the door or the open windows. Altogether there were forty present. It was a hot afternoon, quite a contrast to the morning, and the room was very close.

After my sermon an unexpected and touching incident occurred. Mr. Nathaniel Jones, one of the leading "old-timers," got up and addressed me on behalf of those present, desiring me to thank the Society for all that it had done for them. I replied briefly, and then the congregation slowly dispersed. It was to Mr. Jones's shack that we went for a most hospitable tea, and found a large family assembled. However, as always, we had to hurry off, for there were several more miles to be driven in order to reach Lloydminster, in time for the evening service.

The lamps were already lighted when Archdeacon Lloyd, Mr. Riley, the divinity student in charge, and myself, robed in the little screened-off corner of the church which serves as a vestry. I looked round the interior of the church with much interest. Its walls lined with wood, and the long stove-pipes which traverse the ceiling give an impression of cosiness, but the plain wooden benches show no sign of luxury.

It was impossible to be in the building and not to think of the time when, three years and a half before, the Society commissioned **Some** Mr. Lloyd to act as chaplain to the all-British **thoughts** colony. It is doubtful whether the colony would **at Lloyd-** have been persevered with but for Mr. Lloyd; it is **minster.** certain that Lloydminster church and the little churches near would not have existed but for the Society and its friends. Thus the first visit of an official of the Society to the place which owes so much to it was in a small way an historical event. I could not help saying to the people when I preached, how strong was my sense of what God had done by means of the Society; how closely we in England followed the fortunes of the district with interest and prayer; and how sincere were the bonds of sympathy which bound us to them. I shook hands with them all as they went out. So home and to bed, my record for the day being three sermons and a drive of twenty-four miles.

Monday morning was principally spent in photographing in Lloydminster. After midday dinner another buggy was packed up "**Bowen's.**" -- not the one with broken springs and I said good-bye to Lloydminster. We drove off to the south to "Bowen's," a little church where Mr. Hunt, son of the Rev. D. J. Stather Hunt, of Tunbridge Wells, is lay-reader. The



LLOYDMINSTER DISTRICT--LESTER'S: THE SHACK BUILT OF SODS IN WHICH SERVICE USED TO BE HELD UNTIL RECENTLY

journey was uneventful, and the service not dissimilar from those already described. There were very few at the service, but the congregation included two or three big dogs. After service we just called at Captain Bowen's house, and then struck off across the prairie to find "Stringer's."

We passed on the way a house where the late owner had committed suicide, and where his wife keeps on the farm. She meets with much kindly help from the neighbours. **A mixed community.** Then we came upon several English folk who had evidently been of the poorest class in the "old country." However, the noise of the "binder"—that is, the reaping machine—told a tale of brighter hopes now. As a contrast to these people we had tea at a shack whose owner is a Cambridge graduate and a member of a London club.

It was quite late when we got to the little church at "Stringer's"—otherwise known as Marshall—and met not only Mr. Stringer "Stringer's," and his family, but also Mr. Cracknell, a lay-reader who had only recently come out from England. It should be explained that these centres are frequently named after the first or most prominent settler, and thus are often in the possessive form. Later on some more permanent name is chosen.

After service we went to Mr. Stringer's house to supper. There were a number of young men, including two grown-up sons of our host. It was pleasing to see how these young fellows competed for the privilege of playing with a little baby girl of about two years old, the child of the house, and born in the colony.

Conversation turned on the subject of washing, *à propos* of a "tenderfoot" who wanted to know how his washing was to be done.

"Most of the boys," said Mrs. Stringer, "do **On washing and cooking.** their own washing."

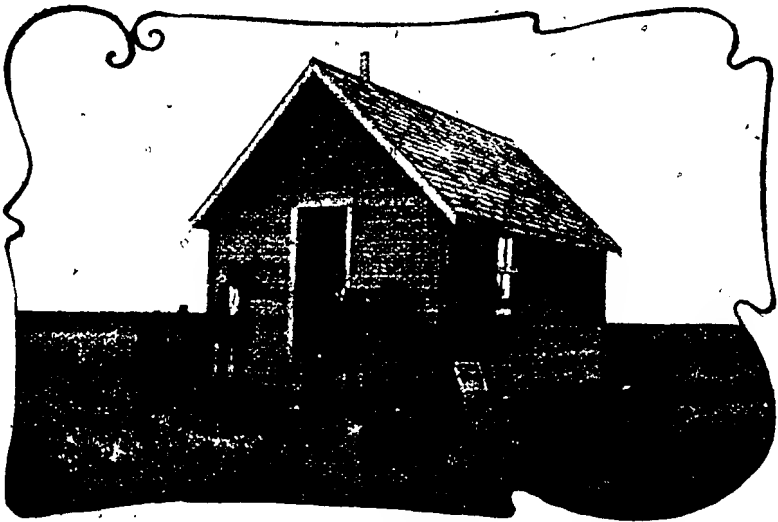
A young settler who was sitting in the corner, said: "I would back myself to wash and iron a collar with anybody. Before I left England I could wash and cook too. I don't know whether Archdeacon Lloyd knows it, but when he came to my father's vicarage I cooked the dinner that he ate." That is the sort of spirit that makes good colonists.

We had about a mile to drive after we broke up. Fortunately there was a light ahead of us, and with a lantern the way was quite clear. **Driving in the dark.** There was much talk of the difficulty of finding one's way over the prairie on a dark night, where there was practically nothing to guide one. Nothing seems to be easier than to get lost in the darkness.

Marshall, now a town on the railway, is a little distance from Stringer's. Here Mr. Malaher, son of the Rev. W. E. Malaher, of Shifnal, and nephew of the lamented **Marshall**.

Mr. H. G. Malaher, has a store, and he led the way to the upper floor, where we passed through a line of bags of flour and other such goods to a part which is screened off to form a bedroom. With the usual extreme hospitality to a guest, he surrendered his bed to me, and he and Archdeacon Lloyd slept on rugs on the floor.

Tuesday morning was rather wet, and consequently I did not go over to Stringer's to do any photographing. Exton Lloyd appeared



A PRAIRIE CHURCH IN SASKATCHEWAN

in the course of the morning, having ridden all the way down from Lloydminster with a telegram for me. We lunched together at the little railway restaurant—a lumber shack whose upper floor was divided into tiny cubicles and let out to young men working in the neighbourhood. They looked very “rough diamonds,” some of



them, as they came in for their meals and rushed away as soon as they had finished.

In the afternoon we started for our next centre, St. Paul's at the Gully. The Gully is a long and deep ravine which cuts into the ordinary level plain some miles to the north of the line. Its sides are steep, like the banks of the great rivers of this region, in



LLOYDMINSTER DISTRICT: ST. PAUL'S AT THE GULLY, INTERIOR.

fact it may have been an old watercourse. For a long time it acted as a barrier to settlers, and it is only recently that any have begun to take up land beyond it.

St. Paul's at the Gully was formerly "Lester's." The illustration shows the shack in which services used to be held. Now they have a lumber church nearly finished. The front of the tower sticking up without any sides looked very like a hoarding in its unfinished state. Inside, I could not understand why all the women sat on one side and most of the men on the other until I saw the church empty. Then

a look at the seats was enough to explain. The walls were covered with pieces of builder's paper, pinned on. To keep out the winter's cold the church should be panelled, and perhaps this has been done. They had a frontal for the Communion table, which looked like a gift from some church which had got a newer one.

It was an extraordinary effort for people to get out for an afternoon service in the middle of their harvest time, but they did so. Some men came in their working overalls and without collars, rather than not come at all, and they returned to work as soon as the service was over. Waggon and carts drove up full, containing more women and children than usual, but still the men were in the majority. It was a real though unexpressed token of gratitude to the Society for what it had done for them.

They were determined to show what they could do, and sang not only the Canticles but the Psalms and responses! They told **A Musical Service.** me afterwards that they were all from the old country, and had mostly been members of church choirs at home. Nothing could be heartier than the kind feeling at this spot.

Mr. Cracknell, formerly of Wembley, was the lay-reader here, and Mr. Assiter (Liverpool), into whose "parish" we were now to pass, came up also to take us on. After tea we were up and away, but there was a diversion when Mr. Assiter's pony took it into his head to run away playfully.

It was certainly amusing to see Mr. Assiter running after his pony, and that pony sidling away whenever his panting master came up to him. When Mr. Cracknell, mounted on his own pony, but not yet quite up to "cow-boy" form, tried to head off the playful beast, it became very funny. However, we were glad that the sport came to an end by the animal submitting to be captured.

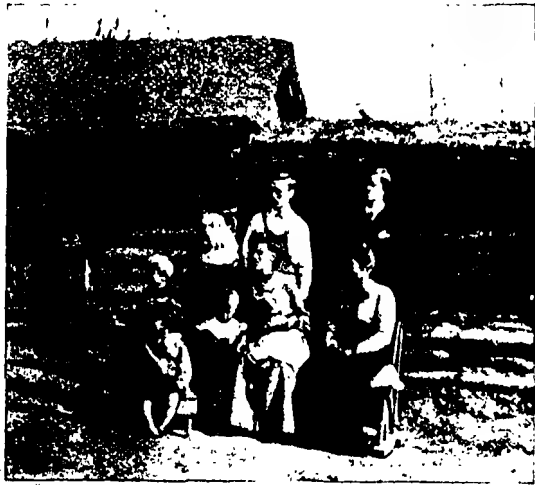
The delay made our start much later than it ought to have been, for there were several miles to go across the prairie, and the afternoon was already far advanced. The trails were far from clear. The little clumps of brushwood and stunted trees, known as "bluffs," were more numerous than they had been in the previous days of our journey. The ground, too, was not so level. One gully that we passed—not *the* Gully, the great natural barrier in that region, but still a sufficiently formidable obstacle—had quite steep sides, and the buggy tilted in an alarming way as the horses struggled down the banks.

Perhaps it was the nature of the landscape which led the

Archdeacon and Mr. Assiter to discuss the unpleasantness of being overtaken by darkness when out on the prairie. It became exceedingly difficult to find your way, it appeared. They agreed that it was most annoying that, after you had given up the search as a bad job and had reluctantly unsaddled your horse and slept rolled up in your blanket, to find in the morning that your destination was only a few hundred yards away. Their talk left the impression that such experiences were not uncommon.

We passed three homesteads much more prosperous than any we had met lately. They were new lumber houses, with plenty of ploughs and

other implements about them; in fact, they showed every evidence of having settled in with a good deal of capital. To my surprise, they were all coloured men, and they turned out to be retired sleeping-car porters from the Canadian Pacific Railway — fine, stalwart men in middle life. It seemed a curious



LLOYDMINSTER DISTRICT: PART OF THE CONGREGATION  
AT CLAXTON'S.

reversal of all one's preconceived notions to find this knot of well-to-do coloured folk settled among English people who for the most part were still struggling for a livelihood.

The evening was fast closing in when we came upon the shack we were seeking, where lived a family named Claxton, husband and wife, and several little children.

**Claxton's.**

The horses were unharnessed, put into a stable, and fed. (I never took any part in these proceedings, being innocent of any knowledge of horses.) Then we went into the Claxton's shack and found a little congregation gathered together,

including two coloured girls, daughters of one of the car-porters above mentioned.

We were to have had two baptisms in the shack, but one of the babies was not there. The other was the child of a neighbour, Mrs. Methereil, whose husband, if I understood rightly, was away at work elsewhere. Archdeacon Lloyd and I took the service between us. The company was small and the room very humble, but the little one was dedicated to God, by a little circle of prayerful hearts. The two coloured girls, who said they had been Presbyterians in Toronto, followed the service with great interest. The chief difference they remarked between our service and their own was that while in theirs the minister alone had a book, in ours everyone had books.

The darkness having now drawn in, Mr. Claxton escorted the two girls to their home. Then the rest of us sat and talked.

**More old-timers.** They were old-timers who had come out in 1903 with the first Britannia Colony, and had much to tell of the hardships of their early days. Not in a whine by any means. On the contrary, the humorous aspect of things tickled them immensely. The Methereils must have been grossly treated by some heartless trader, who, taking advantage of their early ignorance, passed off on them a very aged cow. But Mrs. Methereil rippled with laughter as they told of their struggles to keep that cow alive during the first winter; how, when they anticipated its death from old age by killing it for food, they boiled it for two days without making the flesh eatable; and how a mounted policeman, who passed that way, and thought at first he had dropped in for a pleasant dinner, suddenly found he had urgent business some miles farther on.

They recalled how they had shot an owl, and even a fox, for food; how they had been glad to eat gophers until an American who passed along the trail expressed such disgust as to put them off those little animals; how the whole Methereil family turned out to try to kill a bear, who ran ignominiously away with a charge of small shot somewhere about him, leaving the firer of the gun with a bruised shoulder from the recoil. Yes, they laughed over all these reminiscences, and one, hugging her baby, exclaimed, "But there, I've got two beautiful boys."

Each winter, I was told, the husbands had had to go away to seek work in the towns or on the grading of the railway or in some other such way, leaving their wives and children behind on the prairie. Having started in without capital, they had been obliged

to make a few dollars to live upon and to help stock their farms. Even now they were only just beginning to turn the corner. A certain quantity of land was under crop and ready to be reaped, and it was most pathetic to hear the hopes expressed that if the harvest was only gathered in successfully and good prices obtained, the husbands might be able to stop at home through the winter.

Then they talked of London, and revelled in the familiar names. It was a joy to them to talk to one who had so lately left the dear



LLOYDMINSTER DISTRICT: "THE COW-THEDRAL."

old place. "We shan't be homesick for a long time now," they said.

When bedtime came, I verily believe that they stripped their own bed that I might lie the softer. We three, the Archdeacon, Mr. Assiter, and I, slept on the earthen floor of the shack in which service was held, commonly called the "*cow-thedral*." I, pampered as usual, had a mattress to lie on, but the other two had a "bull robe," rugs, and a waterproof sheet. No one could describe it as hardship.

"Hark!" said Mr. Assiter, as we turned in, "do you hear the

coyotes howling?" There were several of them in different directions, and no great distance away.

Next morning we had a plentiful if frugal breakfast, and then the good folks talked and talked until it was time to be off. It

seemed as if they could not let us go. They followed us until we were mounted. It was in the morning that I was pointed at as the man who might perhaps be able to get them the means of building a little church.\* The two women rushed



AS IT WAS WHEN WE SLEPT IN IT, AND AS ARRANGED FOR SERVICE.

at each other with delight at the prospect. Nor, I am sure, was it for any lower desire than a love of holy things and the wish to have a place dedicated to the

\* Through the kindness of a friend, who wishes to remain anonymous, a £50 church has been provided for this centre.

THE INTERIOR OF THE COW-SHED



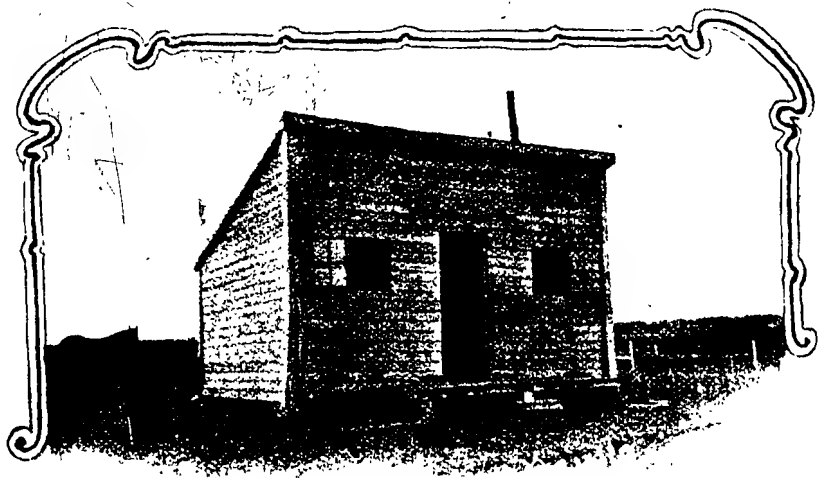
worship of God. There are twenty-three communicants at this centre.

We left these dear people with regret. A great contrast to them was a woman whom we passed on the road, who was much better off than they, but was full of grumbles.

We had a long morning across trails and no trails, with the big tin box containing the provisions and sundries, packed by Mrs.

**Bergey's.** Lloyd's forethought, banging behind us like "sweet bells jangled." Then we arrived at Bergey's, or "Forest Banks," a fine lumber shack with two storeys.

Here there were only women and children, the men being away harvesting. They gave us a capital lunch, and in conversation I



LASHBURN: THE ORIGINAL LAMBETH PALACE.

found out that they were Canadians from away east. They had left a farm in Algoma, and come up nearly two thousand miles to try the new land of promise. Naturally they had plenty of "plenishing," and knew how to make the best of the land.

Whilst we were talking, I happened to pick up a book, and saw that it had been given by the Rev. E. J. McKittrick.

**The same Society.**

This rivetted my attention in a moment.

"He was our minister," said one of the family.

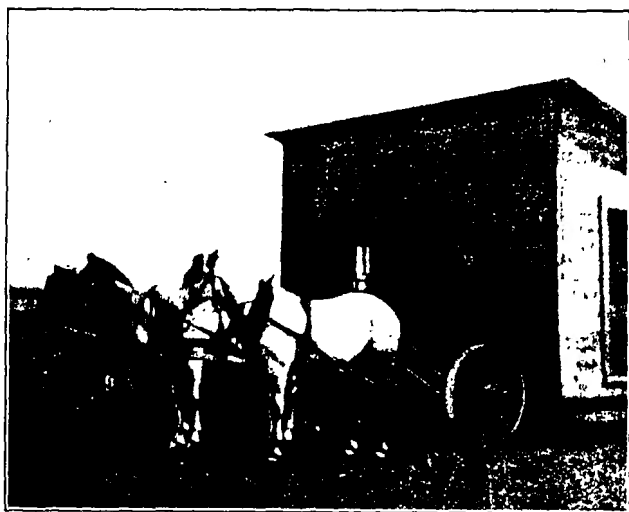
"Yes; and do you know," I replied, "he received a grant from our Society? You were indebted to the Colonial and Continental

Church Society then, and you have come all this way to find its help here also."

Mr. Assiter told me to my surprise that there are thirty-four communicants at this centre.

We had a very nice service that afternoon, in the big room, with none but women and children present, and we watched some of our congregation walking quite a long way over the prairie. We had an American organ, or piano (I forget which) to accompany the singing, so we were quite grand! Then tea and a hurried farewell, for the drive was to be an immense one.

We passed many shacks, for the land was completely settled in those parts. What chiefly impressed me was that among the



MOVING LAMBETH PALACE.

people we met that afternoon were the only ones who did not care about religion. Almost universally elsewhere it was plain that they welcomed the means of grace.

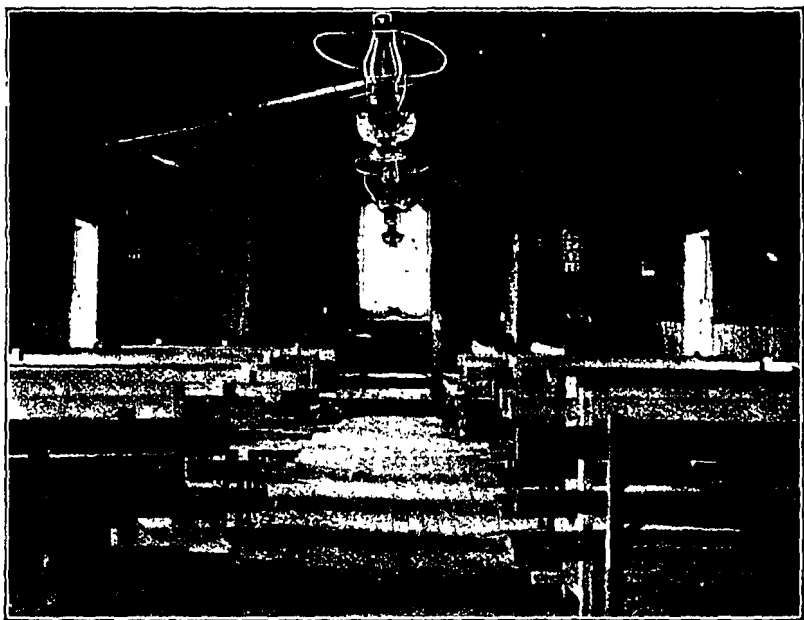
We had been making final arrangements as we drove along, and Archdeacon Lloyd decided that though we had driven twenty-four miles he must commence the drive back to Lloyminster, twenty miles more. So he started back and left me at Lashburn.

We arrived full late at Lashburn, where there is a church, and where Mr. Davies's original "Lambeth Palace," now made more



comfortable by being divided into two rooms, has become Mr. **Lashburn**. Assiter's home. It was put on wheels and dragged by horses a considerable distance to its present position.

Lashburn used to be known as Klombie's, and the Klombies still have a store there. There is now a railway station, and a rather large hotel. Alas! when I went there for my bed at night there were only two downstairs rooms open. One was the bar, and



LLOYDMINSTER: THE INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH.

in the other a crowd of men were playing cards. There seemed to be no other place in which to spend the evening.

Perhaps the presence of this influence made the difference in the place as compared with the prairie centres. There was for once hardly any congregation in the little church, except the Shilletos, Mr. Klombie, and one or two others. I remember noticing the reading-desk, which was ingeniously composed of three packing-cases fastened one on top of the other, the smallest forming the ledge on which the books rested.

The one daily train was to start eastward at 5.35, so I arranged to be called. The call did not come off, and I awoke with a start at the very moment when the train should have been in the "depôt." I hurried on my things and rushed downstairs, only to find a weary and unshaven young man, who looked as if he might have been up all night, lolling back in a chair with his heels on the table. "Needn't hurry," he explained; "train forty minutes late." So I had time to go back and wash. Presently the train came in, I got on board, and my most interesting and pleasant week on the prairie was over.

The work described in the above narrative needs, as we said in the Prefatory Note, to be repeated many times over if the great immigration area is to be covered adequately. The Colonial and Continental Church Society, 9 Serjeants' Inn, Fleet Street, E.C., is appealing for a Special Fund for N.W. Canada. £50 will put up a wooden church, £20 will send out a clergyman or lay-helper, £30 will build him a wooden shack to live in, £70 a year (with local help) will provide him with a stipend.

